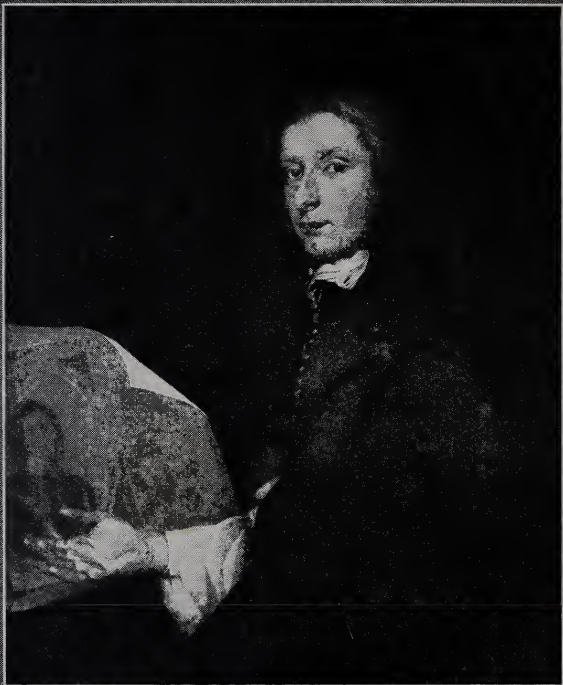


ENGRAVING
AND
ENGRAVERS

ENGRAVING
and
ENGRAVERS



WILLIAM FAITHORN

Reproduced from Portrait

National Portrait Gallery, London, Eng.

ENGRAVING AND ENGRAVERS

OLD AND NEW

BY
GEORGE HEBARD PAINE

1922
THE FAITHORN COMPANY
CHICAGO

PRESS OF FAITHORN COMPANY
CHICAGO, U. S. A.

*“A ‘Faithorn Sculpsit’ is a charm to save
From dull oblivion or an early grave.”*

SO WROTE Thomas Flatman in the Year of Grace 1674, under a portrait engraved by William Faithorn, the elder, who stood at the head of his art in England during the reign of Charles the Second.

Those were desperate times for artists, and Faithorn, a mere boy studying under Peake, joined his master in fighting for the hopeless

cause of Charles the First, thereby suffering capture and a long imprisonment in Aldersgate. While there he practiced drawing and engraving until released, whence, journeying to France, he studied with some of the greatest artists of that land, learned the use of colors and perfected himself in the French language. His temporary banishment therefore proved a blessing in disguise since it induced a culture much greater

than was common then, even to people of great wealth.

All of this counted powerfully in Faithorn's future work which, in its turn, was a strong factor in raising the standards of English art, hitherto of an extremely low character. Van Dyck, it is true, had been persuaded to cross the Channel and, while in England, had painted many beautiful pictures. But there were no museums or galleries in those days, hence the

mass of the English people were without a suspicion that great works of art existed. Royal palaces and the halls of the nobility were rich in treasures brought from France, Italy and Spain, but they could be seen only by royalty, the nobility and their retainers. Unfortunately, before the love for beautiful things, which Charles and Henrietta attempted to introduce, was able to gain a foothold, came the Civil War, came Cromwell,

came the psalm-singing puritan with death or disaster to all that was graceful or ornamental in British life.

“One swallow does not make a Summer,” nor could the transient visit even of a Van Dyck create an artistic atmosphere among the Roundheads who “pigged it” near the Court of St. James. But upon the restoration of the Stuarts in the person of Charles the Second, better conditions prevailed, and

Faithorn came into his kingdom also. From the moment of his return he seems to have been employed constantly in producing portraits and other pictures, largely of religious subjects, for the nobles of the court and the rich merchants of London who began experiencing a feeling of security, unknown before then during nearly the whole period of English history.

It is difficult to make any

comparison, with what was regarded as the perfection of its time, without incurring the risk of appearing disrespectful, yet truth is mighty and must prevail—the engraver of today has a choice of methods at command which, if he could see them, would drive a seventeenth century predecessor delirious with astonishment! Half-tones, photogravures, zinc plates, color processes; the list is almost an endless succession of technical

terms. But photography enters into nearly all if not absolutely every process, with such utter success that of all the contemporary wood, steel or copper engravers of pictures who were so distinguished a few years ago, only two or three are at work today. Truly, as Frith said in his autobiography: "photography, is the foe-to-graphic art! Quite so but equally it has proved to be almost the whole ancestry of the printing art.

The date of William Faithorn's birth is not known definitely, but he died in 1691 and much of his best work was done in the years just before and immediately following 1660. Here and now, precisely two and a half centuries later, the old name lives in Chicago, associated with the old art by one of his few descendants.

Beginning simply as printers, The FAITHORN Company soon found it impossible to reach that

perfection for which they aimed, without a complete equipment for the production of a book in its entirety—type, engravings, press-work and binding. But of these, the engravings presented the greatest difficulty when it was attempted to have them made by others, owing to the delicate relations which exist between the illustrations and the printed matter of a perfect book. It would be tiresome to recite all of the

disappointments encountered in dealing with various outside engravers, leading finally to the decision which assumed material form in the present plant.

For this pamphlet, at which you are now looking, even the type itself was manufactured, the frontispiece was engraved, the printing was done on the presses and the pages were bound, wholly within the establishment of
THE FAITHORN COMPANY

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE



3 3125 01257 4741

